

Summary of NWS Directives Implementing NOAA Partnership Policy

This document summarizes four policy documents contained in the National Weather Service (NWS) Policy Directive system (<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>) which are the primary documents governing implementation of the Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Environmental Information of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/partnershippolicy/index.htm>). (Referred to below as the “NOAA partnership policy.”) *(The directives themselves, not this summary, are the authoritative source for NWS policy.)*

NWS Policy Directive 1-10, *Managing the Provision of NWS Environmental Information*

- NWS Policy Directive 1-10 is the top-level controlling directive which formally implements the NOAA partnership policy and establishes authorities of NWS officials.
- Purpose: Establishes guidance for documenting and seeking comments on NWS products, services, and dissemination systems used for provision of environmental information.
- Major provisions:
 - Recognizes the public interest is served by the ability of all sectors (private, academic, and government) to provide diverse services to meet varied user needs.
 - Commits NWS to give due consideration to entities in all sectors and consider the effects of its decisions on others to best serve the public interest and advance the nation’s environmental information enterprise as a whole.
 - Establishes top level principles for NWS participation in the environmental information enterprise.
 - Commits NWS to communicate with, seek comments from, and consider the views of affected parties prior to initiating, substantially modifying, altering the method of provision, or terminating significant information services.
- Scope. Policy applies to all NWS information services including:
 - Products (e.g. data, forecast, and model guidance),
 - Services,
 - Dissemination systems, and
 - Web sites (including significant changes to URL/URIs on these sites)
- Significant Information Service - An information service that meets any of the following conditions:
 - is required by law;
 - involves substantial expenditure of funds;
 - by reason of the nature of the service, is a matter of continuing public interest; or
 - by reason of the time value of the service, commands public interest

(The directive contains additional guidance on determining whether a change is “significant.”)

NWS Instruction 1-1001, *Tracking and Public Notification of Proposed Changes to NWS Information Services*

- NWS Instruction 1-1001 establishes procedures for public notification of proposed changes to NWS information services which are subject to the review and comment provisions of Directive 1-10.
- Major provisions:
 - Requires NWS parties who are proposing a significant change (addition, modification, termination) to an NWS information service to provide certain information including:
 - Point of contact for information on proposed change
 - Who to address comments to and the opening and closing dates for comments
 - Deciding official
 - Decision (when reached)
 - Requires NWS to make this information publicly accessible

NWS Instruction 1-1002, *Termination of NWS Information Services*

- NWS Instruction 1-1002 establishes a process to institute an open environment, both internal and external to NWS, for carrying out termination of an NWS information service, from initial proposal to final implementation. Major provisions include:
 - Identifies the NWS Strategic Planning and Policy (SPP) Office Director as the responsible party for oversight of *nominations* for termination including:
 - Serving as point of contact for anyone who wishes to nominate an NWS information services for termination
 - Reviewing all such nominations and conferring with appropriate officials to identify those that will be proposed for termination.
 - Identifying the Deciding Official for any NWS information service proposed for termination
 - Communicating with the nominating party
 - Identifies the designated Deciding Official as the responsible party for oversight of remaining steps for any information service for which the NWS *proposes* termination including:
 - Conducting public notification and comment processes (as required by Directive 1-10 and Instruction 1-1001)
 - Evaluating comments and making a decision

NWS Instruction 10-102: *New or Enhanced Products and Services*

- NWS Instruction 10-102 established procedures for implementing a new product or a significant change to an existing product. Within its scope, it provides additional detail for implementation of Policy Directive 1-10. Major provisions include:
 - Instructions for preparing a Product Description Document which provides technical information about the product and non-technical information such as the purpose(s) the product is designed to serve and its connection to the NWS

- mission.
- Identification of responsible officials for conducting a comment and review process and deciding whether an experimental implementation of the product is to be made permanent.
- Scope:
 - A distinction is made between “regional/local” products and “national” products.
 - Instruction 10-102 applies to NWS products, but exempts numerical prediction guidance products.

Notes:

1. These four NWS directives now cover all requirements of the NOAA Partnership Policy regarding initiating, substantially modifying, altering the method of provision, or terminating significant information services. Collectively they address the decision making process for such changes in NWS information services. *After* such decisions are made, another NWS Directive describes procedures for notifying recipients of these products that they *will* be changed (NWS Instruction 10-1805 – *National Service and Technical Change Messages*).
2. As a historical note, Instruction 10-102 and Policy Directive 1-10 were promulgated before adoption of the NOAA Partnership Policy in December, 2004. Policy Directive 1-10 was updated in June, 2005, to formally install the NOAA Partnership policy in NWS, with Instructions 1-1001 and 1-1002 providing additional procedural detail.